



National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
Goddard Space Flight Center

Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Virginia

# Inside Wallops

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## *Wallops Supporting Peregrine Falcon Studies*

Once on the verge of extinction, the Peregrine Falcon is making a comeback in the mid-Atlantic Region. NASA is teaming with state and federal agencies, academia and industry to learn more about and conserve the habitat of the Peregrine and restore this falcon species.

Odean Serrano, Environmental Management Division at NASA Headquarters said, "Although the Peregrine Falcon has been delisted as a federal endangered species, Virginia has maintained this status due to the critical and endemic habitat of the mid-Atlantic region. Through a concerted effort involving numerous marked birds across several sites with information for several years, it is believed that we may be able to better understand some of the problems facing these majestic birds in the mid-Atlantic region."

"NASA is supporting the electronic banding and monitoring of up to three Peregrines in the vicinity of the Wallops Flight Facility," said Joel Mitchell, Wallops coordinator for the project.

"After becoming endangered, the first breeding pair in Virginia was on Wallops Island in 1981. The facility is still home to Peregrines in the marshland surrounding the Island. Banding and monitoring is expected to begin as early as June, 2001," he said.

Captured birds will be fitted with small radio transmitters that will allow the Peregrines to be tracked. This data will be transmitted via the NOAA Polar Orbiting Environmental Satellite (POES).

Serrano said, "NASA is seeking to use satellite telemetry to investigate activity of young falcons at the Wallops Flight Facility. If successful, similar efforts involving other species may be conducted at other NASA centers." This data will then be integrated into the NASA Agency Environmental Geographic Information Systems Database."

Other members of the mid-Atlantic Peregrine Falcon Network include Dominion Power, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia Department of Transportation, College of William and Mary and EARTHSPAN.

### *Peregrine Falcons - Fastest Birds in the Air*

Diving to kill their prey at over 100 miles per hour, peregrine falcons are said to be the fastest birds on earth. Their name comes from the latin word peregrinus (meaning traveller).

About the size of a crow, the peregrine falcon is a distinctive bird with a dark stripe coming down from the top of their head, accented by a white throat and the sides of their neck. Their tails are long and narrow with black bands. In dry or cool climates, peregrines will be paler in coloring than their counterparts in more humid or warmer areas.

Females will be larger than males with both sexes having wingspans around 40 inches.

## *Wallops shorts.....*

### *Guest Speaker*

Keith Koehler was guest speaker for the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce Annual Membership Dinner on March 16.

### *Science Fair Judges*

Donna Galeone and Randy Carrier, PRC; Al Beebe, SESI; and Peggy Jester, Raytheon served as judges for the Pocomoke Middle School Science Fair on Saturday, March 17.

### *Welcome back*

Henry Cathey, PSL, has returned to Wallops following the completion of the Ultra Long Duration Balloon Australia Campaign. The Wallops "outback survivor" was in Alice Springs, the Northern Territory of Australia for almost three months.

### *Aircraft Fires to be the Norm This Week*

Fire fighters from Wallops and surrounding companies will receive training this week on how to fight aircraft fires.

The Commonwealth of Virginia Mobile Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting Trainer will be used to simulate fire scenarios.

The trainer looks like a small corporate jet with only one wing. The unit includes realistic mockups of an ejection seat, landing gear, cockpit, flight data recorders, aircraft batteries, pressurized cylinders and front and rear exit doors.

Training includes a main cabin fire, an engine fire, fuel spill fire and a week/break fire. The unit generates smoke in the baggage compartment, cockpit and battery compartment.

The trainer is controlled by computer commands and can be programmed to repeat training as needed. The system uses propane gas as a fuel for the fire simulations. The unit has an emergency shutdown system in the event of a problem.

### *Change in Rating Cycle*

In February 1997, GSFC adopted the Employee Performance Communications System (EPCS). GSFC implemented EPCS with yearly ratings distributed over a period of four quarters and a commitment to reevaluate the appraisal period at a later time. Based on a review of feedback and data the EPCS rating system will be changed to a one year rating cycle in which all employees will be rated from October 1 through September 30.



PAO Digital Photo

Carolyn Massey, Management Operations Directorate; Craig Purdy, Suborbital and Special Orbital Projects Directorate; Marshall Ryon, FKW, Inc. and Bernie Riesbeck, Eastco Building Services, Inc. took part in a ribbon cutting March 15 marking the completion of phase one of the Cafeteria renovation project.

## ***Domestic and Family Violence***

Goddard Space Flight Center recognizes that domestic violence is a serious, identifiable and preventable problem that we should address. A program has been initiated to educate employees about domestic violence, provide support to employees who seek help, and provide tools for supervisors to help victims and deal with suspected perpetrators.

Domestic or family violence is a pattern of controlling behaviors that restricts the activity and/or the independence of another person. It may include physical, sexual and psychological abuse and/or economic control.

Domestic violence does not stay at home while its victims or perpetrators go to work. It can become workplace violence. It has been estimated that 25 percent of workplace problems, such as absenteeism, lower productivity, turnover and excessive use of medical benefits are due to domestic violence. Domestic violence is responsible for 175,000 lost workdays per year.

Employees or supervisors who want confidential information, advice or help dealing with a potential issue of domestic violence should contact the Employee Assistance Program.

### ***When Domestic Violence Comes to Work***

March 28  
10 to 11:30 a.m. for supervisors  
1 to 2 p.m. for employees  
Building F-3

Sponsored by the Women of Wallops  
Federal Women's Program  
and the Employee Assistance  
Program

## ***Piping Plover Beach Closures***

Effective March 15, 2001, the north and south ends of Wallops Island are closed to pedestrian and vehicular use.

The closures are part of our continuing cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect the piping plover, a federally endangered species along the Atlantic Coast.



The only island area open for recreational use is to the north of the launch areas and south of a cable barrier that extends across the beach to the water's edge. Pedestrian access points are the dune crossings east of the old helicopter pad and Camera Station 15.

For further information or map of the area call Cheryl McCready, x1885

## ***Be a Sponsor***

NASA Wallops Flight Facility, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Navy Surface Combat Systems Center (SCSC) will be taking part in the national "Take Our Daughters to Work Day" on April 26.

Participation in "Take Our Daughters to Work Day" is open to young people in fourth through twelfth grades. Sponsors must be government employees. Contractors are welcome but should contact their management for approval to participate in the events that are sponsored by the Federal Women's Program.

Students and their sponsors should report to the Cropper Center on April 26 at 8 a.m. for registration and a welcome. Students will then attend the session they have selected. Transportation will be provided to these sessions.

Sponsors should pick the students up at 11:30 a.m. at the Cropper Center. The rest of the day may be spent on the job with the sponsor, or the student may attend afternoon activities. Sponsors are responsible for transportation to afternoon activities.

If you don't have a child in this age group, consider sponsoring a relative or neighbor's child.

Registration is required no later than April 6. All sessions will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.

For more information or to register call Lisa Johnson, x1412 or Marilyn Ailes, x2082.

## ***From FEDWeek March 14 Issue***

### ***Another Bad Month for C Fund***

The Thrift Savings Plan's common stock (C) fund suffered another losing month in February, its seventh of the last 12, dropping 9.12 percent and bringing its 12-month return to a negative 8.19 percent.

The bond (F) fund gained 0.87 percent and the government securities (G) fund gained 0.42 percent for 12-month gains of 13.51 and 6.2 percent, respectively.

Meanwhile, money in the G fund is being invested at a 5.25 percent annual rate in March.

## ***Spring is here!***

The vernal equinox occurs at 8:31 A.M. EST March 20. The word equinox is derived from the Latin words meaning "equal night."



The vernal, or spring, equinox is the point at which the Sun appears to cross the celestial equator from south to north, signaling the beginning of nature's renewal in the Northern Hemisphere.

## ***President's 2002 Budget Blueprint Available On-Line***

A Blueprint for New Beginnings — A Responsible Budget for America's Priorities (issued February 2001) is a summary of the President's budget plan for Fiscal Year 2002 and can be found on the OMB home page at <http://w3.access.gpo.gov/usbudget/index.html>.

It will be followed by the traditional, more detailed, budget documents in April.

The NASA portion of the President's FY 2002 Budget Blueprint released on February 28 can be found on the Legislative Affairs web page at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/legaff/fy2002blueprint.html>.

Additional detail concerning the FY 2002 budget plan will be released next month with the Administration's expanded FY 2002 budget.

You can also find the latest Congressional hearing calendar on the Code L page at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/legaff/calen.html>

## ***Upcoming Training Simplified Acquisition***

April 17, 2001  
9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
Building E104, Room 310

The course is Center funded. Requests for Training can be faxed to x66-0302.

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